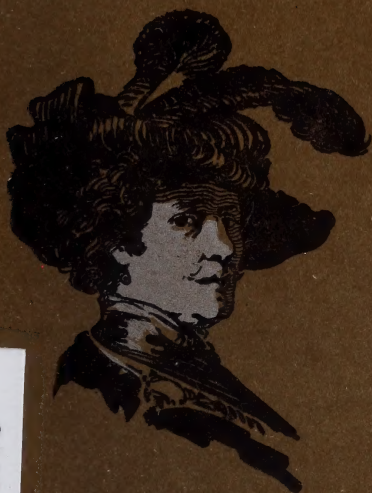


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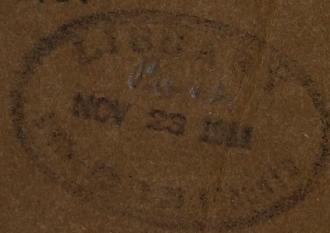


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DUTCH ART

by

James Howard Gore



44 Nov 6 1873 Boston



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THE TOPPER, BY FRANZ HALS.

DUTCH ART

AS SEEN BY A LAYMAN

BY

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Columbia University, Washington, D. C.

1856-1929
Painting, Dutch



*"We derive the pleasure of surprise from the works
of the Dutch painters in finding how much interest Art,
when in perfection, can give to most ordinary subjects."*

—John Constable.

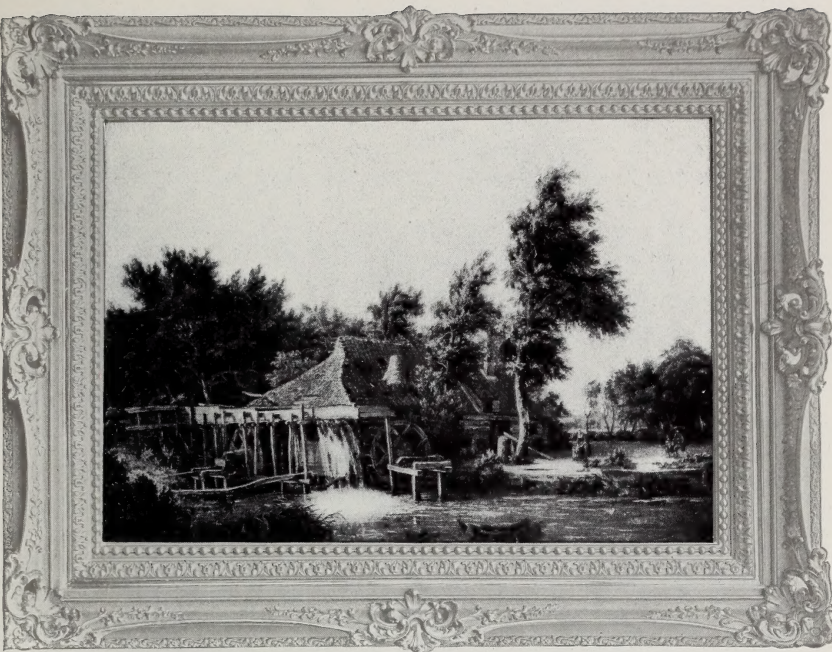


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THE MILL, BY HOBBEEMA.

DUTCH ART.



TOURISTS are somewhat like sheep—they follow in the footsteps of those who have gone before. Even in their ejaculations of admiration, they frequently give echo to the "Ohs!" and "Ahs!" of others, feeling that it would be evidence of ignorance not to admire what their predecessors had found worthy of praise. People who travel are expected to praise the works of art that are to be seen in foreign galleries, and to show that they have traveled and found pleasing the pictures they looked upon, many photographs are carried home. The artist, of course, finds material for criticism favorable and otherwise, but we say that is his *metier*, his business. How does art impress a layman? What can he see in the countless galleries of the old world? And what will he say about art when he speaks with candor, indifferent to the praise or blame of his artist friends? The writer of this little sketch is a layman who does not know enough about schools of art to purposely select one from all, but good fortune placed him repeatedly in contact with Dutch Art, and he proposes to tell in the pages that follow how it impresses a layman, hoping that others ignorant as himself may see in these impressions how much of pleasure they may experience in going through the galleries of Holland. This, then, is the excuse that should be offered, for the reader will soon see that no new facts are presented, neither are old errors swept aside.

Tourists
and
travelers

Art and
the layman

Dutch
School

There is nothing more instructive or curious in the history of art than to trace the rapid rise of the Dutch school, its wonderful reign, and its rapid decline. No other painters have given us such a large insight into the contemporary domestic life of their countrymen as the Dutch. The artists themselves, when their lives are correctly known, prove to have been very similar to their brethren in other lines. Some were good, others bad, with all possible gradation between these two extremes, but the many stories about their riotous and dissolute actions are now known to be false.

The Dutch figure painters did not appear in all their greatness till some time after the first part of the War of Independence, when the portion of the Netherlands, now Belgium, became more specially Spanish territory, as distinguished from the Northern Provinces which were known as the United Netherlands. Prior to this, artists, taking their pattern from the Italian painters, devoted their energies to the glorification of the church, but with the securing of political freedom came the impulse to throw off the semblance of allegiance to the church with which the Spaniards had been so intimately associated. The Dutch artists, therefore, as if by magic, produced a fresh and national art. They set man in his true place in nature, and sometimes did without him altogether, just as nature in her solitude can do without him. Freed from the restraining influence of tradition, they sought to copy with consummate skill what they saw before them—they created for themselves a new field of pictorial matter, in which national sentiment found expression, and the immediate result of this was the

A new
field in
art



SANDY ROAD, BY RUYSDAEL.



COTTAGE INTERIOR, BY A. VAN OSTADE.

creation of one class who could desire and purchase, and another who could produce the splendid portraits, the beautiful interiors, the noble landscapes, and the glorious sea pieces. These works of art have been handed down to show succeeding generations the aspect of the land, and the faces and fashions of the men and women who lived in it—persons who formed the vanguard in the march of civil and religious freedom, who won great victories in behalf of human rights, and broke the chain that fanaticism had placed upon the intellect and conscience of mankind.

We can trace in the works of the early Flemish painters a tendency to paint domestic subjects, and when freed from the necessity to paint for the clergy and the church, the true bent of the national art among the Dutch showed itself at once. The majority of the Spaniards devoted their energies to scriptural scenes, though when Velasquez painted contemporary scenes, they were usually some royal pageant or battle scene. In Germany we have little beyond the portraits of Holbein and others, and it was not until Hogarth came that scenes of English life were portrayed. Amongst the Dutch artists of about this period we find Ruysdael, who has handed

Flemish
domestic
art

down to us faithful representations of his native Haarlem seen from a distance. Hobbema has made us acquainted with the surroundings of Dutch cottage life in the seventeenth century; Cuyp gives us an insight into the affairs of the well-to-do classes; while Potter shows us the farm life of his time with a truth that has never been surpassed.

Rubens
and
Rembrandt

Beside the River Scheldt, Rubens was buying indulgence from the priest by painting altar pieces; while Rembrandt would take some old Jew from out the slums of Amsterdam, and paint a portrait of the old Shylock with as much care, and truer to life than Rubens could master when painting a St. Peter or a St. Paul.

The Belgian artists clung to scriptural subjects, because their works were to adorn sanctified walls, but the people of Holland had accepted a colder form of religion, and worshipped in churches less adorned with the arts of man. Their artists, therefore, had no church pictures to paint. The great industrial development of the country called into existence a number of corporations and guilds, and with their increased wealth was the desire to adorn the walls of their meeting places with portraits and groups of themselves. The governing bodies of the many charitable organizations, for which the country so early became famous, also wished to perpetuate their likenesses, as did the shooting societies. These portraits and groups are now known as the "Regent" and "Doelen" pictures. Among the early pictures of this kind is the "Commemoration Banquet of Bowmen," painted by Teunissen (1553), now in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.

Regent
and
Doelen
pictures

It was in the sale of such pictures that the Dutch artist supported himself, but when yielding to his inner longing, he painted smaller pictures for the smaller rooms of the merchants of Amsterdam and of the Hague. *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba*, *Samson and Delilah*, *Judith and Holofernes*, all these old favorites of early Flemish painters gave place in freed Holland to the old cobbler and his spouse, the housewife and her child, the gallant and his lady love, and such domestic scenes. Rembrandt, indeed, would now and again paint pictures from Holy Writ, but in a manner that no artist had ever dared to do. He represented the Man of Sorrows, as one poor among the poorest, miserable among the wretchedest, as one, indeed, a sufferer and acquainted with grief. They are pictures full of the divine compassion that fills the principal figure with more divinity than all the glories of nimbuses and crowns in the works of the Italian schools could bestow; but Rembrandt's sacred paintings were not intended to decorate the walls of a church. Few indeed even of Rembrandt's pupils attempted to paint sacred subjects; they knew the national taste, and took their models from the life and the scenes around them. It is sufficient to recall the names of Terborch of Bol, of the Van Ostades, and a half a dozen others to illustrate this."

The sincerity of Dutch art shows itself in the care with which the drawing was done. The Dutchmen drew everything that came within the scene of the picture. Then he overlaid it with color, but not for the sake of mere beauty of effect. They thought, they felt and composed in color. The delicate gradation of color and the disposal of light and shade in mass as well as in detail were their natural means of expression. Those objects, which, without color, would be insignificant, took on, under the hands of the Dutch artist, an ideal charm by the modulation of color-tone.

They evaded some of the greatest difficulties in skies, and also missed some of their most effective impressions. As, for example, they did not attempt to render the glorious coloring of sunrise and sunset, the



PAINTING, BY C. FABRITIUS.

lurid gloom of gathering storm, nor the grace and beauty of the fleecy clouds. But what they did attempt, they accomplished. They caught and held the true sky quality—space, air and light—and apparently by the simplest means, for all Dutch clouds look as if one could copy them quite accurately in two or three sittings, an impression which is hopelessly delusive, for there are but few artists in the world who can copy them at all. The whole of Dutch painting has this facile, unpretending appearance, and the effort that its creation costs never obtrudes itself, nor is there any suggestion of the tricks of craft or the fruits of science.

Effects
obtained
by
simple
means



MENAGERIE, BY JAN STEEN.

Physical
conditions
affect
Dutch art

In no country have the physical conditions made such impressions upon the character of the people, their institutions and their art development, as has been the case in Holland. The uncertainties of existence, the dangers of overflows from broken dykes and the ever present likelihood of seeking assistance to replace lost property, have made the Dutch charitable, and their charity has taken on highly organized forms.

The long winters that keep the people indoors, caused them to look with regret upon the approach of autumn, and hail with joy the coming of spring. The enforced sitting around the house fire made them familiar with every detail of the interiors, and caused them to regard with more than usual attachment, every article within the house. So when the art instinct found expression, it sought for subjects, the sea that was both friend and foe of the Dutch, the glow of the autumnal sun, the cows within the fields, and the simple furnishings about the parental hearth.

Therefore, the art instinct did not have to look for themes, nor wander far in search of subjects. And this explains how it was in the brief space of a single century, they developed a complete school. It does

not take you back to prehistoric days when skin-clad Frisians and Batavians were damming, dyking, and draining—reclaiming the drowned soil from the incursions of the sea and the ocean. Nor had it begun to blossom when the venerable Rhenish school had already been made illustrious, but it dates from the period when courage, constancy, and self-sacrifice had given Holland an actual history, when its substantial citizens found money to spare for matters comparatively frivolous, and when artists ranked among the recognized guilds that were remunerated like other handicrafts. From the first, Dutch artists turned their attention to the real, making little pretension to inspiration, and showing few signs of imagination. The quality that comes forward most pre-eminently amongst those who made the reputation of this school is sincerity. Unfortunately this was a fault in the coarser subjects that were treated. For without attempting to point any moral, or even showing that they were conscious of the existence of any moral, they depicted drunken men and gambling women, as though they were as great a part of their nature, as it was for dogs to bark or sparrows to twitter. This was a narrow art. "The short and simple annals of the poor" are soon exhausted when there is lacking the pathos of sorrow, the charm of childhood, the beauty of youth, and the venerableness of age. This barrenness in art found its parallel in literature. The novel, whether of manners or of passions did not yet exist. The ballad of common life was almost unrecognized as poetry. It was a hundred years before Rousseau

Dutch
art
real

Literature
and art



PATERNAL ADMONITION, BY GERARD TERBURG.

and Goldsmith—two generations even before Gay, Fielding or Richardson.

Minute
fidelity

As a rule the Dutchman could do no better than look out of his window or stroll to the nearest gate of the town he happened to live in. He did so, and as there was no room anywhere for the play of his fancy, he endeavored to outshine his rivals by assiduous observation and minute and meritorious fidelity.

The
Dutch
landscape

"The consequence is, as we said, that any of us may see Holland without going there. People who care little for painting, and know as little of physical geography—who, in spite of the works of Salvator Rosa, are ignorant whether the Abruzzi is a country, or mountains, or a maremma—are perfectly familiar with *A Dutch Landscape*. Land them at Rotterdam, and let them leave that city by the railway to The Hague, and they seem to be as much at home as if they were traveling along their own, the well-known thoroughfares. Far as the eye can reach stretches that dull flat of rank, rich, unwholesome-looking green they have seen so often, with the shadowy sails of the more distant windmills vaguely breaking the horizon. There is the straight net-work of ditches arranged rectangularly to drain the superabundant moistures into the broad canal with its deep-laden barges and an occasional *trekschuit*. Dotted about everywhere are the groups of great, coarse-bred cattle, often watery-sky blue in their color, like the milk they yield in such profusion—the cattle that enliven the pieces of Cuyp and Paul Potter. Here and there, at long intervals, stands in its birch enclosure one of the bold, red-roofed farm houses; or, much more frequently, you pass by a windmill, the sturdy miller, red nightcap on head and china pipe in mouth, standing in the door on the top of a ladder, superintending the lowering of the sacks into the rough, broad-wheeled cart which the gray horse has backed against the wall. With the boor who drives, and the miller's man, and the miller's wife in her clean starched cap with the lappets pinned back at the ears, the group might have been standing there since Wouwerman or Jan Steen took them for a study. Not that by any means follows that the painters came for their studies to this particular mill, for similar scenes are repeating themselves at thousands of mills over the length and breadth of the country, as they have been repeating themselves for centuries."

Historical
instinct
absent

Stirring events took place while the Dutch artists were calmly painting servant girls with brooms, and peasants drinking at ale house doors. It is strange that their blood was never aroused to a livelier interest in what was going on. The historical instinct seems to have been absent from the old Dutchmen. They would paint portraits when ordered, and some of their portraits have historical value, but they do not seem to have thought of this—it is pure existence. They had not even sufficient imagination to embody the memories of the glorious deeds by which their ancestors

had immortalized themselves in making their country. There are no great national battle pictures of those struggles of the War of Independence, when Dutchmen fought Spaniards, waist deep in the water, nor are there souvenirs of De la Marck and his desperate beggars of the sea. Thus it is that in all the vast world of art there is no province more peaceable than the little Dutch land. "There the woods are quiet and the roads are safe; there the slow boats float gently along the canals; there the folk drink, smoke, dance in the light of the sunny evenings, where the tavern-signs swing in the air. The seasons take their turn, and the whole life of the year passes before us. Winter comes, and every canal is a merry skating-rink.

A land
of peace



LANDSCAPE, BY P. POTTER.

The painters paint it all; winter and summer find them alike observant, and equally ready to share and to portray the happy human life that passes around them.

They observe and portray the life, but always in a curiously general way. They give you, it is true, many studies of faces and of localities which must assuredly have been portraits, but they never select as subjects for their pictures any particular anecdote or incident. Such incidents as they do illustrate are nothing but the very commonest situations of every-day life, such as persons drinking, peasants in a hay field, cows in a pasture, skaters on a canal, in which there is no special incidental interest whatever. There is never any passion or pathos in the ordinary Dutch art. No particular event seems ever to have roused the artist or engaged his interest enough to make him paint it. As

Art of
every-day
life

History
not a
theme

for any notion of elevating either themselves or their public, no such idea ever seems to have occurred to these artists. They bestow the most skillful labor quite calmly and deliberately upon the lowest details of the lowest life."

With the struggle for independence, liberty, reform and painting were also renewed. With religious traditions fell the artistic traditions, the madonnas, saints, mythology, and the ideal—all that had been cherished during the antecedent century fell to pieces. Holland imbued with a new life, felt the need of manifesting and enlarging it in a new way; this small country leaped at once into glorious and formidable proportions; the faculties which had been excited in the grand undertaking of creating a nation, now that the work was completed, overflowed and ran into new channels; there was now security and prosperity; the heroes had done their duty, and the artists were permitted to come to the front; Holland, after innumerable sacrifices and intense suffering, issued victoriously from the struggle, lifted her face among her sister nations and smiled. The delineation of that smile rests in her art.

"What that art would necessarily be, might have been guessed, even had no monument of it remained. "A pacific, laborious, practical people, continually beaten down," to quote a great German poet, "to prosaic realities by the occupations of a vulgar, burgher life;" cultivating its reasons at the expense of its



GUEST CHAMBER, BY JAN STEEN.

imagination; living, consequently, more in clear ideas than in beautiful images; taking refuge from abstraction; never darting its thoughts beyond that nature with which it is in perpetual battle; seeing only that which is, enjoying only that which it can possess, making its happiness consist in the tranquil ease and honest sensuality of a life without violent passions or exorbitant desires; such a people must have tranquility also in their art, they must love an art that pleases without startling the mind, which addresses the senses rather than the spirit, an art full of repose, precision and delicacy, though material like their lives: in one word, a realistic art in which they can see themselves as they are, and as they are content to be."

Tranquil
and
realistic
art

The subjects of their pictures are poor enough—a windmill, a canal, a grey sky;—but how they make one think! A few Dutch painters, not content with nature in their own country, came to Italy in search of hills, luminous skies, and famous ruins; and another band of select artists is the result, Both, Swanevelt, Pynacker, Breenberg, Van Laer, Asselyn. But the palm remains with the landscapists of Holland, with Wynants, the painter of morning; with Van der Neer, the painter of night; with Ruysdael, the painter of melancholy; with Hobbema, the illustrator of water and windmills, cabins, and kitchen gardens, and with others who have restricted themselves to the expression of the enchantment of nature as she is in Holland.

Simultaneously with landscape art was born another kind of painting, especially peculiar to Holland—animal painting. Animals are the riches of the country; and their magnificent race of cattle which has no rival in Europe for fecundity and beauty. The Hollanders who owe so much to them, treat them, one may say, as part of the population; they wash them, comb them, and love them dearly. They are to be seen everywhere; they are reflected in all the canals, and dot with points of black and white, the immense fields that stretch on every side, giving an air of peace and comfort to every place, and exciting in the spectator's heart a sentiment of arcadian gentleness and patriarchal serenity. The Dutch artists studied their animals in all their varieties, in all their habits, and divined, as one may say, their inner life and sentiment, animating the tranquil beauty of the landscape with their forms. Rubens, Snyders, Fyt, and other Belgian painters had drawn animals with admirable mastery, but in a way quite distinct from that of the Dutch artists, W. Van der Velde, Berchem, Karel der Jardin, and of the prince of animal painters, Paul Potter, whose famous *Bull* in the Gallery of the Hague, deserves to be placed in the Vatican beside the *Transfiguration* by Rafael.

Dutch
animal
painting

In yet another field are the Dutch painters great—the sea. The sea, their enemy, their power and their glory, forever threatening their country, and entering in a hundred ways into their lives and fortunes; that turbulent North Sea, full of sinister colors, with a light



THE CANNON SHOT, BY W. VAN DER VELDE, JR.

Dutch
marine
art

of infinite melancholy upon it, beating forever upon a desolate coast, must subjugate the imagination of the artist. He, indeed, passes long hours on the shore, contemplating its tremendous beauty, ventures upon its waves to study the effects of tempests, buys a vessel and sails with his wife and family, observing and making notes, follows the fleet into battle, and takes part in the fight; and in this way are made marine painters like William Van der Velde, the elder, and William, the younger, like Backhuysen, Dubbels, and Stock.

Another kind of painting was to arise in Holland, as the expression of the character of the people and of republican manners. A people which without greatness had done so many great things, as Michelet says, must have its heroic painters, if we call them so, destined to illustrate men and events. But this school of painting—precisely because the people were without greatness, or to express it better, without the form of greatness, modest, inclined to consider all equal before the country, because all had done their duty, abhorring adulation, and the glorification in one only of the virtues and the triumphs of many—this school has to



CORN FIELD, BY RUYSDAEL

illustrate not a few men who have excelled, and a few extraordinary facts, but all classes of citizenship gathered among the most ordinary and pacific of burgher life. From this come the great pictures which represent five, ten, thirty persons together, arquebusiers, mayors, officers, professors, magistrates, administrators, seated or standing around a table, feasting and conversing, of life size, most faithful likenesses, grave, open faces, expressing that secure serenity of conscience by which may be divined rather than seen the nobleness of a life consecrated to one's country, the character of that strong, laborious epoch, the masculine virtues of that excellent generation; all this set off by the fine costume of the time, so admirably combining grace and dignity: those gorgets, those arms and banners."

Rotterdam has but little to offer in the way of paintings, a large number having been destroyed by fire in 1864. There is, however, a museum here named in honor of its principal contributor Boymans. Here one may become acquainted with some particular artist, but there is no opportunity to become familiar with the Dutch School. Perhaps the most important pictures are the sea sketches by Van der Velde, perhaps the greatest marine painter of his time. His father was also a painter of the sea, and living in the time of the great maritime wars between England, France and Holland, they saw great battles with their own eyes. The States of Holland placed a small



RIVER SCENE, BY ALBERT CUYP.

Van der Velde

frigate at their disposal, and they made sketches in the midst of the cannon smoke, sometimes dangerously near the conflicting vessels. Van der Velde, the younger, was regarded as surpassing his father. His best works are generally small pictures showing a grey sky, a calm sea, and a sail. But though small, the details are so carefully worked out that in looking upon it, it seems as though it were possible to feel the breeze of the ocean, and to hear the roar of its waves, while the frame is changed into an open window. In common with many artists, he loved the sea, almost madly. But it is natural that the sea should hold a prominent place in the affections of the Dutch, since it enters so largely into their lives and fortunes. The sea has been their greatest enemy; it has also been their source of power and glory.

Ruysdael

There are to be seen in this gallery two good pictures by Ruysdael, perhaps the greatest of Dutch painters of rural scenes. They represent his favorite subjects—woody and solitary places which inspire in the beholder a vague sentiment of melancholy. The great power of this artist who stands alone among his brother painters for delicacy of mind and a singular superiority of education lies in his sentiment. It has been justly said that he makes use of landscape to express his own bitterness and weariness, his own dreams, and that he contemplates his country with a sort of sadness, and creates groves of trees in which to hide it. "The veiled light of Holland is the image of his soul; no one feels more exquisitely the melancholy

sweetness; no one represents, like him, with a ray of languid light, the sad smile of some afflicted creature. It follows as a matter of course that so exceptional a nature was not appreciated by his countrymen till long after his death."

Close by is a group of flowers by a woman painter, Rachel Ruisch, born in the second half of the seventeenth century. It is by no means a striking picture, but it is remarkable as having been painted by a woman. She died at the age of eighty, her brush in hand, having proved to the world that a woman may cultivate the fine arts, and still have time to bear and bring up ten children.

Albert Cuyp, who gave a part of himself to Dutch art, has several pictures here. He was essentially the painter of the peaceful side of human life and nature. He depicted stately gentlemen on horseback, with their retainers, riding in a dignified manner, or directing the work of a body of fishermen. His shepherds and herdsmen with their flock and herds, seem to be a contented, peaceful type, who pipe away their afternoons or converse with the passing traveler. He was a two-sided genius who needed no collaborator to add

Rachel
Ruisch

Albert
Cuyp



FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS, BY JAN STEEN.



THE IMAGINARY AILMENT, BY JAN STEEN.

figures to his landscapes, or landscapes to his figures. It appears that in his efforts to depict nature, he thought more of her than of the cannons of art, for while giving in a wondrous way the effects of hazy distance, he placed in a landscape, figures ludicrously large in comparison with their surroundings. Sometimes, too, he lost sight of proper relations, for we find a Groningen cow in a landscape of Gelderland, or a corner of a Holland meadow in sight of the Limburg Maas.

Jan
Steen

Steen has two of his best pictures here, *The Feast of St. Nicholas* and *The Imaginary Ailment*. The former represents a merry family group of seven persons. The fidelity with which he painted these children surely refutes the story of his dissolute life and proves that there must have been a preponderance of good in this eccentric painter. The other shows a doctor cutting a stone out of the head of a Boorish peasant to the great amusement of the bystanders. Steen like Moliere often introduced scenes in which the doctor was the hero. His drawing of them reveals their character as well as their forms.

One can see that he wishes to show them as pompous empty headed quacks, with sombre garb, peaked hats and long gold trimmed canes, intended to awe their patients so as to secure confidence in ability which they themselves knew that they did not possess.

In this museum may be seen some of the best works of Van Goyen sometimes called the father of landscape painting. He saw that there was poetry in the watery landscapes of his native land. He possessed the boldness of Rembrandt, the minuteness and careful insight of Dou, and studied the face of nature with the loving care of Ruysdael. He got her more sombre features, and transferred to his canvas her stormy moods, and painted with the skill of the highest kind, the rich colors which his keenly trained eye saw before him.

Hobbema is represented here by a small landscape showing a shaded cottage by the side of a pond of water. Although, his work exhibits a moderate talent only for composition; there is a delicacy and thoroughness of elaboration, especially in his treatment of atmosphere and light that cause his pictures to be prized as works of a genius of the highest order.

"Nature, as he painted her, is not a beautiful fiction; it is nature herself, such as we meet in certain parts of our country. His landscapes are not crowded with figures, but he has introduced them soberly so as not

Van
Goyen

Hobbema

Hobbema's
landscapes



LANDSCAPE, BY HOBBEEMA.

to disturb the calm which pervades them, and which so well suits their rustic life. Hobbema did not trouble to embellish his subjects by strange and unsuitable ornaments; he sought nature in nature, and not elsewhere. There are moments when her aspect inspires us with indescribable sensations, sometimes with melancholy joy, sometimes with a holy quietness. In these moments of rapture, the soul initiated into the beauties of creation, opens itself to all which is good, pure and noble. Hobbema knew how to seize such effects and translate them into his paintings. We there find again pictures which the contemplation of nature herself had produced and developed vaguely in our mind, renewed clear and precise. It is that which draws us to his paintings, so to speak; while contemplating them, one feels oneself transported into nature's midst. It follows that the value of his works increased as soon as the relationship of beauty and the ideal with truth and simplicity were understood, and that art, inclined upward toward a purer taste and philosophic intelligence."

It is in the older Holland that you have the opportunity of studying the best examples of Dutch art. Rotterdam is too much given up to commerce to devote much time or energy to the cultivation of the gentler arts. So the tourist who lands in this Venice of the North will hurry along to the Hague, the diplomatic capitol, and Amsterdam, the home of the capitalists. He may visit some of the quaint old-fashioned towns, the dead cities of the Zuider Zee and the towns of fabled cleanliness, like Broek and Zaandam, but there will come to him a longing to see Holland of an older date, Holland in a frame, as seen through an open window, and so the galleries will be visited.

The
Hague

At the Hague, adjoining the Binnenhof, stands the Mauritshuis, once the residence of a Nassau Prince, now the home of a collection of pictures, which, of themselves, justify a visit to the Royal Residence. It is not great in point of numbers, nor confusing by the multiplicity of rooms. The variety of the paintings, representing many schools does not bewilder the mind, nor prevent full enjoyment of the great master-pieces. There is a quiet charm about the place, isolated as it were, from the rush of hurrying feet, and the possibility of looking at length upon each picture, eliminates all feeling of impatience and the thought that haste is necessary in order to see everything within its walls. One may sit here at one's leisure and enjoy some of the most superb examples of the Dutch school.

Mauritshuis

Paul
Potter's
Bull

Immediately upon entering, after having ascended a flight of stairs, you find yourself in front of the most celebrated of painted animals: Paul Potter's *Bull* a bull which is almost immortal, a picture for which any gallery in the world would pay a fortune to possess, and for which Holland would not take a fortune twice as large. Many pages have been written

about this simple picture, more, in fact, than the number of strokes of the brush that were required in its painting, and the number of pages has not yet reached its limit.



BULL, BY PAUL POTTER.

It is a simple picture: a life-sized bull standing looking toward the beholder, a cow lying down, a few sheep, a herdsman and a distant landscape. The casual observer whose attention is drawn to this picture, will say that its charm lies in the detail with which each part is worked out. It seems as though each hair had been painted, and that the glossy coat had been carefully rubbed down. But the supreme merit may be more simply stated: the animal is alive. The grave, startled eye, expressing such a vigorous vitality, almost amounting to fierceness, is so faithfully depicted that the first impulse of the spectator is to step aside as though he were meeting the real creature in a country road. "The moist black nostril seems to smoke and absorb the air with a deep inspiration. The hide is painted with all its wrinkles and the traces of rubbings against trees and earth, so that it looks like reality. The other animals are not inferior: the head of the cow, the wool of the sheep, the flies, the grass, the leaves and fibres of the plants, all are rendered with prodigious truth to nature. And whilst you appreciate the infinite care and study of the artist, you see no marks of fatigue or patient labor; it seems a work of inspiration in which the painter, influenced



PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF, BY REMBRANDT.

with a sort of a fury, has not known an instant of hesitation or discouragement. Many censures were passed upon this "Incredible piece of audacity in a youth of twenty-four." They blamed its great size and the vulgar nature of the subject; the absence of luminous effects, the light being everywhere equal and without contrast of black shadows; the rigidity of the bull's legs; the dry coloring of the plants and more distant animals; mediocrity of the figure of the shepherd. But in spite of it all, Paul Potter's *Bull* remains crowned with the glory of an acknowledged *Chef d'oeuvre*, and Europe considers it as the most majestic work of the prince of animal painters. "With his bull" justly says an illustrious critic, "Paul Potter has written the true idyl of Holland."

Gerard
Dou

Another treasure of The Hague Gallery is a small picture by Gerard Dou. It represents merely a woman seated by a window, a candle beside her. The influence of the picture is soothing. Its harmonious coloring and exquisite finish are delightful to the eye. Its atmosphere is so peaceful and homelike that it is easy to understand its fame. Dou was the master of minuteness and finish, and frequently his skillful and delicate manipulation takes the place of poetical

expression, and the range of his fancy is contracted in a measure corresponding with his elaboration of finish. It is recorded of this patient painter that he bestowed the labor of five days on the hand of a lady, that he passed more than three days of toil in copying a broomstick, and that, although he commenced painting when only fifteen years old, and worked incessantly until his death, at the age of sixty-two, only two hundred pictures of his are known in the various galleries of the world. A proof of Dou's talent as a painter is that the engravings of his pictures are remarkable for the subtle beauty of their shade. It is also recorded that when Charles II returned to England, the States General could think of no more precious gift to present to His Majesty than one of Dou's works, and this is said to have been one of the little interiors in which a mother is nursing her child.

Rembrandt is magnificently represented here, the chief example of his skill being *The School of Anatomy*, a group of portraits executed in the unapproachable style of this prince of portrait painters. This picture represents the celebrated anatomist Nicolas Tulp, a friend and patron of Rembrandt, in a vaulted saloon, engaged in explaining the anatomy of the arm of a corpse. He wears a black cloak with a lace collar, and a broad-brimmed soft hat. With his half raised left hand he makes a gesture of explanation, while with his right he is dissecting a sinew of the arm of his subject. The corpse lies on a table before him. To the right of Tulp is a group of five figures, and two other men are sitting at the table in front. These listeners are not students, but members of the guild of surgeons of Amsterdam, as shown by a paper held by one of them. They are attending to the lecture with

Rembrandt

The
school
of
anatomy



THE STAALMEESTERS, BY REMBRANDT.

very various expressions. They are all bare-headed dressed in black, and with turned-over collars, except one who still wears the old-fashioned upright ruff. There are perhaps other persons present in the hall, as Tulp appears to be looking beyond the picture, as if about to address an audience not visible to the spectators, and it is here worthy of remark that Rembrandt's compositions are never imprisoned in their frames, but convey an idea of a wide space beyond them. It is somewhat singular that the spectator seems hardly to notice the corpse lying before him at full length, the



SCHOOL OF ANATOMY, BY REMBRANDT.

feet of which he can almost touch, although it is strongly lighted in contrast to the surrounding black garments, and most faithfully presents the peculiar hue of a dead body, leaving no doubt that it was painted from nature as well as the living heads. The admirable art of the composition consists in its power of riveting the attention of the living in the presence of death.

Rembrandt's
Life

Rembrandt, throughout his entire career, showed a fondness for effects produced by strong and full light thrown upon principal figures, but it is not until several years residence in Amsterdam that we find his pictures suffused with that rich golden brown tone which invest his master-pieces with their subtle and peculiar charm. About 1654, his pictures receive a still

warmer and more subdued tone, and are brown even to dimness, but retain, nevertheless, the unfaltering breadth in execution. The life he led amongst the tulip beds that crept on by the river side into the dunes, the scarlet patches divided by mounds of sedge-covered sand, left an impression upon the receptive artist, and showed itself in his work until crowded out by a girl's face; first a young face, archly smiling, then as Queen of the Fairies, later in rich dresses and jewels, and, later still, as a matron by her husband's side. It is Saskia van Ulenburgh, the painter's wife. It has been said that Rembrandt's style is emblematical of his life, which alternates from the full flood life of happiness to deep shadow and gloom. His life was one of hard work. He passed through the joyous experiences of a happy married life. He fell upon dark days and had to steer his bark over stormy seas. The year of 1642 is marked with the strongest light and shadow. "The artist's greatest triumph, the man's greatest loss," he painted *The Night Watch*—Amsterdam's pride and greatest treasure, and his fame was brightest. The shadow fell, and he followed his girl-wife to the tomb.

The Night Watch

Alone, without the wife of his love, feeling the stress of want, appealing to the world for the praise



LADY WRITING, BY METZU.

and material recognition that had been his portion in the days of his prosperity, he became seamed, worn, older. Bold, independent of tradition, and indifferent to the thoughts of those about him, too proud to court the world's smile, he lived for his art, and wrought it out according to the conceptions of his genius and untrammelled by bondage to any school. Judged by the standards of his contemporaries, he achieved but little; weighed in the balance of following decades, he attained not only the headships of the Dutch schools,



MILL, BY HOBBEEMA.

but a prominent place among the greatest artists of the world.

Rembrandt's
influence

For the glory of Dutch art lies in its naturalness, and Rembrandt was easily the leader and the chief, and, though his successors did not realize his influence, later critics can see in the interiors of Ostade, the woodland glades of Hobbema, the cattle of Potter, the court-yards of de Hooch, and the seas of Bakhuysen, the same all pervading love of reality.

Rembrandt's
pictures

The other works of the brush of Rembrandt are *The Portrait of a Young Man*, perhaps the artist himself, *Susanna at the Bath*, for which Saskia is supposed to have served as model, and the famous *Presentation in the Temple*. This last named picture, painted in 1631, is the earliest important composition of the artist, and while the faces are by no means oriental, the spirit of the scene depicted, shows the care with which the artist had prepared for his work by the study of the Bible.

In the middle of the temple, the fantastic architecture of which is lost in the darkness, the light is concentrated on a group of seven persons. Simeon, with eyes raised towards heaven and wearing a robe glittering with gold, is represented kneeling, with the infant Christ in his arms; the Madonna, in a light blue robe, with folded hands, is also kneeling, while Joseph on his knees offers the sacrificial doves. A little to the left, as a counter-poise to Simeon, is the high priest, with a long flowing robe, and almost turning his back on the spectator, raising his right hand, which gleams in the strongest light, in an attitude of benediction. Behind the Virgin are two rabbis. To the left, in the background of the aisles, several groups are observed in the twilight, and to the right, in the chiaroscuro, are a number of people ascending and descending the stairs. On the same side, quite in the foreground, are two venerable old men sitting on a bench. The back of the bench bears the monogram R. H. (Rembrandt Harmensz) and the date 1637. This admirable little work, of the master's earliest period, already exhibits the bold touch and the striking effects for which Rembrandt is famous,



SUSANNA AT THE BATH, BY REMBRANDT.



PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE, BY REMBRANDT.

but the Madonna, who stands in the full light, is somewhat cold and insignificant in character.

Jacob
van
Ruysdael

Ruysdael's
pictures

Jacob van Ruysdael is represented in this collection by *A Distant View of Haarlem*, a little picture only eighteen inches in height, but which has for a foreground a level meadow on which strips of linen are being bleached, houses standing by the side of the bleaching ground, and beyond, stretching to the horizon, a monotonous plain, almost totally destitute of trees or dwellings, with the town and church of Haarlem in the distance, surely a bold feat to attempt to put so much of detail and perspective within such narrow compass. It is thought by many that he was the greatest landscape painter that modern art has ever produced, and surely no other painter has been able to express with greater power the poetry of northern lands. He presents it in all its solemnity, quietude and monotony. He was not only a draftsman of the first order, but he was a harmonist as well. His color, warm and soft, exhibits, in the half tints of light and shade, variations of exquisite sweetness. Never did artist succeed as Ruysdael in concentrating in his skies, fields of sombre and threatening clouds, so melancholy and tender a poetical feeling. Never

did the simple nature of his native country find an interpreter so skillful and so pronounced. Unfortunately, Holland is not particularly rich in his works, hardly more than a dozen in all.

M. Blanc, in a sympathetic essay on the poetry of his works, says, "Ruysdael was the painter of nature's elegies and the poet of souls tried by sorrow. He seeks the most mysterious solitude, paths untrodden; he sits at the foot of ruins; he wanders in the midst of deserted tombs, he follows the side of torrents of which the noisy and monotonous fall lulls human suffering to rest; at times he contemplates the ivy clinging to the large trees, mirrored in the midst of inundated plains. In a corner of the world, forgotten by man, where mourning nature seems to weep over her isolation, he lingers. The dying Goethe cried, "Light,



DISTANT VIEW OF HAARLEM, BY RUYSDAEL.

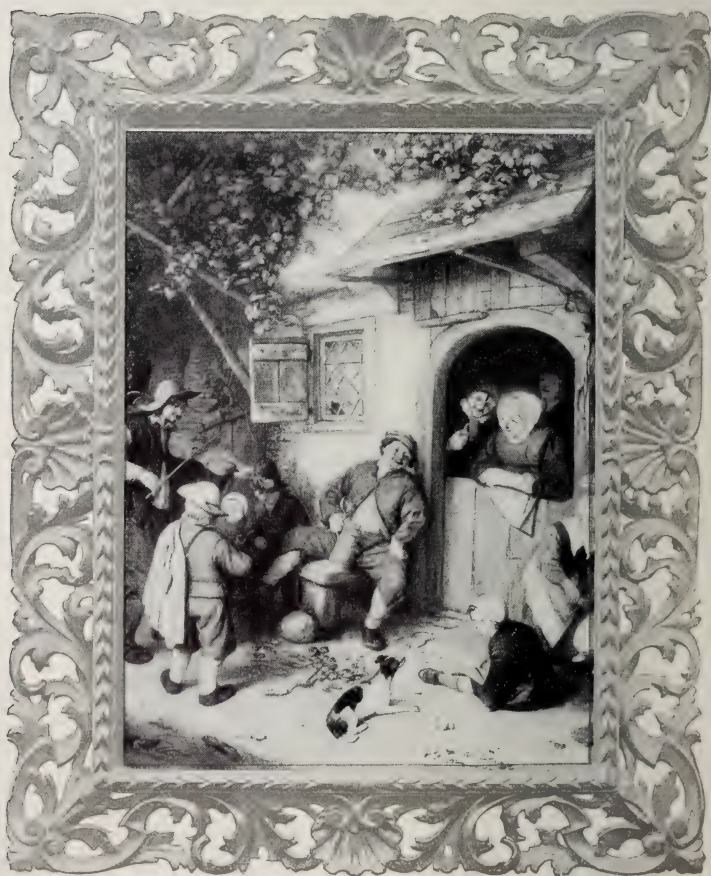
more Light;" I imagine that Ruysdael in speaking of his cascades, rocks, waves and lowering clouds would have said, "Sadness, more Sadness." He knew in short that kind of sentiment that Montaigne vaguely guessed, without having felt when he wrote: 'I imagine that there is a certain kind of daintiness and fastidiouness even in the bosom of melancholy.' He had no need to search for funereal and terrible effects in his landscapes, to call to his aid, thunder or the deluge. Often it sufficed him, in order to inspire in us an inexplicable melancholy, to show us a gigantic pine-tree, tall and naked. The depth of the wooded landscape loses itself in the midst of the horizon; the tree raises itself lonely and detached against the deep sky; the still shadow darkens the waters of the lake which surround the narrow promontory where its roots are buried. One or two cows bathe farther off, and the

ripples of the water alone trouble the deep silence of this retreat. The idea, the arrangement, and the composition of the picture are of the greatest simplicity, and yet the effect is grand. A young German dreamer said to me one day when showing an engraving of the picture, 'I cannot look at this pine with the rigid foliage, the straight and bare trunk, in the country where its dark countenance dominates all the surrounding vegetation, without thinking of those earthly kings, who, reaching supreme power, find themselves alone and without friends by reason of their having no equals.' "

Adriaan
van
Ostade

The Hague gallery possesses one of the best examples of Adriaan van Ostade. It represents a wandering fiddler, standing in front of an old weather-beaten house, delighting with his skill, a number of peasants. The scene, set in the open air, gave the artist an opportunity of introducing the varied effects of the reflection of light.

Many people, as they look at Dutch pictures, criticise unfavorably the light effects. In many pictures the light is equal throughout, monotonous and totally devoid of half-lights. The weather is dull, the sky has no cloud, but a sort of opaque veil extended over



THE FIDDLER, BY A. VAN OSTADE.



PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF AND FAMILY, BY JAN STEEN.

all, intercepts any ray of sunlight. The darkness seems to come from above, the air has no transparency and the skies are without depth. There are other artists—though few in number—who knew how to render the play of lights and intercept them poetically.

Both classes were painting what they saw—one the real appearance, the other the idealized conditions. The atmosphere of Holland, impregnated with vapor, either casts a sombre mist over the land and hems it in, or breaking up irregularly and abruptly, lets the sun dart through with a brilliancy more pronounced because of its contrast and suddenness. It was only the more daring who sought to reproduce this agitation of the heavens, this mutation of fantastic light and gloomy shadows. If he conquered in this endeavor the struggle passed into his soul, and instead of representing, he created. Just as the dramatist sees all his characters take their place on the mimic stage of his mind and speak their lines in inaudible whispers, the artist gathers darkness and seams and splits it with luminous effects and glints of light. On the unpainted canvas he lets sunbeams dart through the rifts, blends sunset reflections with the yellow rays of candle-light, and peoples the dim depths of their mysterious shadows with forms half seen, half imagined. If there is not too much loss from the brain to the brush, the canvas

Dutch
atmosphere

will reveal the conflict of light and shadows. It was early in the history of art that the Dutch artists felt the existence of these contending elements, and the works of Ostade, Dou and Rembrandt showed so many contrasts, enigmas, and startling effects in the play of light, and so perfectly wrought them out that Holland can claim priority for the successful manipulation of lights and shadows.

Franz
Hals

Haarlem boasts of having been the home of Franz Hals, and it is here that he can best be studied, here in the town and by the market-place where for so many years he was a prominent character. As an artist he stands, in some respects, next to Rembrandt, whom he resembled in force and talent. They both



CAPTAIN ROELOF BICKERS' COMPANY, BY VAN DER HELST.

had numerous pupils, and, in a sense, developed schools of painting.

Hals'
pictures

In the City Hall, here, there is a picture gallery which might with propriety be called a gallery of Hals, as the chief works of that artist are its principal ornaments. These paintings are peculiarly Dutch, and belong to the class known as Regent pieces. There are eight of them, great pictures crowded with portraits, painted at periods ranging over almost the whole of his working life. They represent groups of



ISAAC BLESSING JACOB, BY GOVERT FLINCK.

officers and governors of hospitals and they display a power of portraiture excelled by no artist of the Dutch school except Rembrandt, and a readiness and boldness of execution unsurpassed even by him.

Speaking of Haarlem, Havard says, "Franz Hals must be seen there to be known. At Haarlem he passed his life, unedifying in other respects as that life was. At Haarlem he trained his pupils; there he taught Brouwer and Adriaan van Ostade his marvellous secrets. The master there reveals with unique force his incomparable power, he exhibits the extreme limit of bold execution. Breadth of touch, brilliancy of coloring, boldness in grouping and harmonious composition, all unite in these audacious works, and constitute them a kind of Rubicon beyond which it is impossible to go. Art cannot dare more.

Hals'
pupils

"As you enter this gallery, occupied almost entirely by his large pictures, you experience, for a moment, a singular illusion. You seem to have entered a banquet hall, divided, as great banquets generally are, into different tables; and, at the sound of your step, all the guests have turned around to look at you. They are all groups of officers, of archers and administrators of the hospital, of life size, some seated, some standing, about tables splendidly decorated, and all with faces turned toward the spectator, like people in the attitude of being photographed. On every side are to be seen broad faces full of health and good humor, with eyes fixed upon you, seeming to say, 'Do you

know me?' And there is so much truth of expression in these faces, that you really feel as if you knew them, as if you have met them many times in the streets of Leyden and the Hague. This truth of expression, the jovial character of the scene, the rich and ample costumes of the seventeenth century, the arms, the tables, and there being no other pictures to lead the mind to other times, make it seem that you are really looking at the Holland of two hundred and fifty years ago, feeling the air of the great century, living in the midst of those strong, candid, cordial people. You are not in a gallery; you are present at the representation of an historic play; and you would not be astonished to see Maurice of Orange or Frederic Henry arrive.

Rijk's
museum

The only temple erected to art in Holland is the justly famous Rijks museum of Amsterdam. This splendid building is one of the finest architectural piles in Northern Europe, and is a fit housing for the treasures which it contains. The superb galleries, planned and arranged with the object of exhibiting in the best way the masterpieces of the Dutch school of painting, are complete and not confusing by their number or dimensions.

The building was appropriately placed in the edge of the Vondel Park, and the names of the streets of the neighborhood are linked by association with the glorious past. Near by are Ruysdael-Kade, Franz Hals street, Ferdinand Bol street, Hobbema Kade and Van der Velde street. The exterior decoration is most attractive, and prepares the visitor for the pleasure that awaits his closer acquaintance.

The
Night
Watch

The stranger who enters prepared to admire the two greatest pictures of Holland, has no need to enquire where they are. The throng of visitors, seeming to form a holy pilgrimage, pass from the centre of the vestibule into the Hall of Honor, and on through to the Rembrandt room, to stand before the noblest example of the master's genius, the crowning glory of the Dutch school, namely, the large painting incorrectly known as *The Night Watch*, now generally described by its true name, *The Sortie of the Company of Captain Banning Cock*. This picture is adroitly placed so that the spectator usually gets his first view of it at a distance, when the figures stand out like statues, the wonderful light fascinating the eye, and the rich coloring making an impression that will endure forever.

If you come upon it unexpectedly, you are startled. You see a great crowd of human figures, a great light, a great darkness, and in the multitude of figures calling for consideration your eyes become confused and know not upon which one the attention should be fixed.

"There are officers, halberdiers, boys running, arquebusiers loading and firing, youths beating drums, people bowing, talking, calling out, gesticulating—all

dressed in different costumes, with round hat, pointed hats, plumes, casques, morions, iron gorgets, linen collars, doublets embroidered with gold, great boots, stockings of all colors, arms of every form ; and all this tumultuous and glittering throng start out from the dark background of the picture and advance towards the spectator. The two first personages are Frans Banning Cock, lord of Purmerland and Ilpendam, Captain of the Company, and his lieutenant, Willem van Ruijtenberg, lord of Vlaardingen, the two marching side by side. The only figures that are in full light



THE DISPATCH, BY GERARD TERBURG.

are this lieutenant, dressed in a doublet of buffalo hide, with gold ornaments, scarf gorget, and white plume, with high boots ; and a girl who comes behind, with blond hair ornamented with pearls, and a yellow satin dress ; all the other figures are in deep shadow excepting the heads, which are illuminated. By what light ? Here is the enigma. Is it the light of the sun ? or of the moon ? or of the torches ? There are gleams of gold and silver, moonlight colored reflections, fiery lights ; personages, which like the girl with blond tresses, seem to shine by a light of their own ; faces that seem lighted



THE NIGHT WATCH, BY REMBRANDT.

by the fire of a conflagration; dazzling scintillations, shadows, twilight and deep darkness, all are there, harmonized and contrasted with marvelous boldness and insuperable art. Are there discordances of light? gratuitous shadows? accessories too much brought out to the detriment of the figures? vague and grotesque figures? unjustifiable oddities and defects? All this has been said about the picture. There have been arguments of blind enthusiasm and of spiteful censure. It has been raised to the skies as a wonder of the world, and pronounced unworthy of Rembrandt, discussed, interpreted, explained in a thousand ways and senses. But, in spite of censure, defects, conflicting judgments, it has been there for more than two centuries triumphant and glorious; and the more you look at it, the more it is alive and glowing; and even seen only at a glance, it remains forever in the memory with all its mystery and splendor, like a stupendous vision."

Light
and
color

It is natural that the Dutch artists should lay so much stress on light and color. In a country devoid of mountainous horizons, with forms of nearby objects made indistinct by mists, and outlines only dimly visible, it is necessary to command attention by the use of color. This fondness for color was common to their fellow-countrymen who painted their houses in bright shades, wore dresses of the gayest patterns, and loved the tulips and hyacinths of the richest hues. Should a picture be dull, it would resemble too closely the weary march of seasons, and be like the daily manifestations of nature. To be admired, it must take

on the character of holiday dress, the lightened spots on nature's face, and the artificial glow so carefully infused into the garden's flowers. The artists recognized this demand that harmonized so well with their own impulse, and became potent colorists, and Rembrandt was their chief.

If you turn to the right standing before *The Night Watch*, you see before you another of Holland's most famous paintings—the *Schutters Maaltijd*, of Van der Helst. It represents the banquet given by the arquebusiers of the town to celebrate the peace of Westphalia and the end of the long war between their country and Spain. This picture contains twenty-five figures of life size, all faithful portraits of noted personages. Although every detail of this banqueting scene is most carefully finished, it is not satisfying to the beholder. There is a lack of repose; the heads are quite bewildering, and it is impossible to fix the attention on any individual face. The eye runs along the row nearest to the spectator and then follows the line of heads on the further side of the table. Van der Helst presents to us Nature as she is, unrelieved, never

Schutters
Maaltijd



DANCING LESSON, BY JAN STEEN.

idealized, a 'bare reality. It has been said that, if Nature herself could paint, she would give us such pictures as Van der Helst's. "There is neither unity nor contrast, nor mystery; everything is represented with the same care and the same relief. Heads and hands, figures near or distant, steel armor and lace fringes, plumed hats and silken standards, silver horns and gilded goblets, vases, spoons, knives, plates and dishes, food, wines, weapons, ornaments, all stand out, splendidly-real and fascinating to the eye. The heads, considered one by one, are portraits wonderfully rendered, from which a physician might securely judge of the owner's temperament and prescribe for the health of all. With regard to the hands, it has been argued,



SCHUTTERS MAALTIJD, BY VAN DER HELST.

and with reason, that if taken from the figures and mixed together they could be recognized and replaced without danger of mistake, so fine, distinct and individual are they."

Minute
detail

In Holland, man is brought face to face with the realities of life. Material obstacles must be met at every step. A neglected dyke would soon permit an overflow, and even the sleeping waters will fill the cellar unless pumped out. Realism is, therefore, a part of a Dutchman's nature and gives to his art a distinctive character which shows itself in finished detail. "Everything is represented with the minuteness of daguerreotype; every vein in the wood of a piece of furniture; every fibre in a leaf; the threads of cloth; the stitches in a patch; every hair on an animal's coat; every wrinkle in a man's face; everything finished with microscopic precision as if done by a fairy pencil, or at the expense of the painter's eyes and reason. In reality a defect rather than an excellence, since the office of painting is to represent not



SICK GIRL, BY JAN STEEN.

what is, but what the eye sees, and the eye does not see everything; but a defect carried to such a pitch of perfection that one admires and does not find fault."

This realism gives to Dutch art some of its most serious defects. The artist who seeks to represent material truths, gives to his figures no expression beyond their physical sentiment. The nobler passions do not reveal themselves, and the beholder looks upon eyes that could not weep, and lips that could never know a quiver. This was the trouble with many of the best of Holland's painters, and unfortunately the patrons of art during its most prolific period did not possess much of the spiritual. They were shrewd, had a keen sense of humor, and a mighty belief in themselves. If the artist wished to interest them, he had to represent themselves and their doings, and if he could make them amusing, so much the better, for having met with so many successes in war and commerce, they could well afford to laugh at themselves. This explains why there are so many pictures in the Dutch galleries that treat of trivial subjects; men drinking, peasants fighting, grotesque faces, absurd attitudes,

The practical side

ugly women and ridiculous old men. Steen, Potter, Brouwer and even Franz Hals depicted incidents that while usual at the time when painted could not now be placed within the bounds of propriety.

Jan
Steen

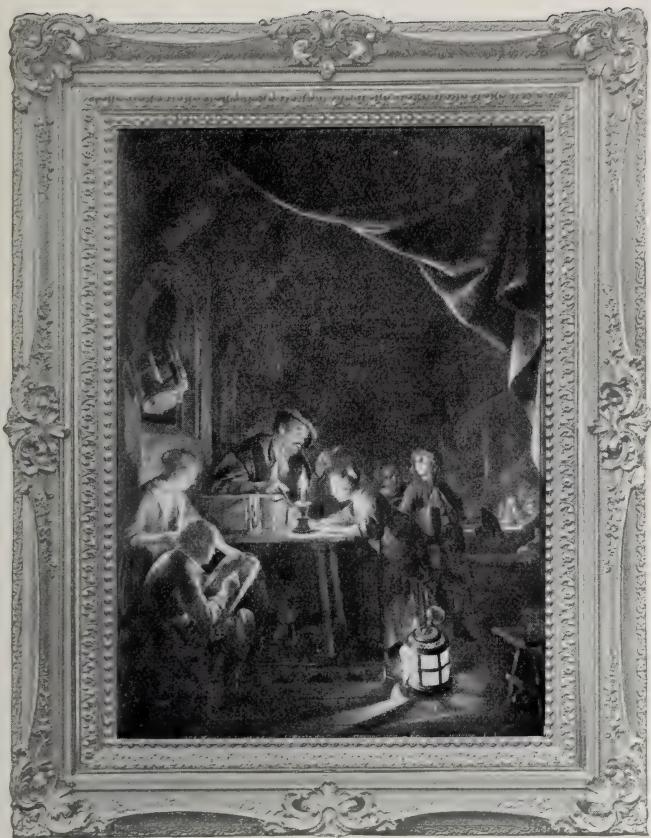
The Amsterdam Museum possesses eighteen pictures by Steen—the Hogarth of Holland—who seemed to enjoy painting grotesque personages. In the picture of the *Mountebank*, his mania for this class of subjects reaches its climax. Here the heads are deformed, the faces grimace, the noses are beaks, the backs are humps, the hands are claws, and the attitudes are contortions.



THE MOUNTEBANK, BY JAN STEEN.

Gerard
Dou

Gerard Dou is represented here by his portrait of himself and his famous picture of the night school. The latter is a small picture, having in the foreground a schoolmaster with two boys and a girl seated around a table; another girl is watching a small scholar who is writing on a slate; and in the background there are other pupils at their studies. The figures, numerous as they are, impress one as accessories only, while the five candles that light up the scene form the subject. One is burning in a lantern left on the floor; one lights the group in the foreground; a third, held by the girl, illuminates the slate; the fourth is upon a table behind, among the boys who are studying; while the fifth is in the hand of a boy quite in the background, descending a flight of stairs. These several sources of light, with their many conflicting shadows, created difficulties that could not have been met by a less gifted artist. This picture, painted, as a critic has



NIGHT SCHOOL, BY G. DOU.

said, "with the eye-lash of a new-born babe," is covered with glass and preserved like a relic.

The paintings of Wouwerman, ten in number, bring before the mind's eye pictures and scenes of the brightest and most animated kind. He was a rare genius who could paint figures, animals and landscapes with equal facility. His subjects were cavaliers and their dames hunting the deer or hawking the heron; cantering across pleasant, sunny fields, under the shadowy woods and down the cool glens: or pacing slowly by the reedy ponds and sedgy streams. Cavalry halting beneath gay pavilions and tents spread under the leafy oaks, or charging wildly amidst the varying fortunes of hand-to-hand combats.

Wouwer-
man

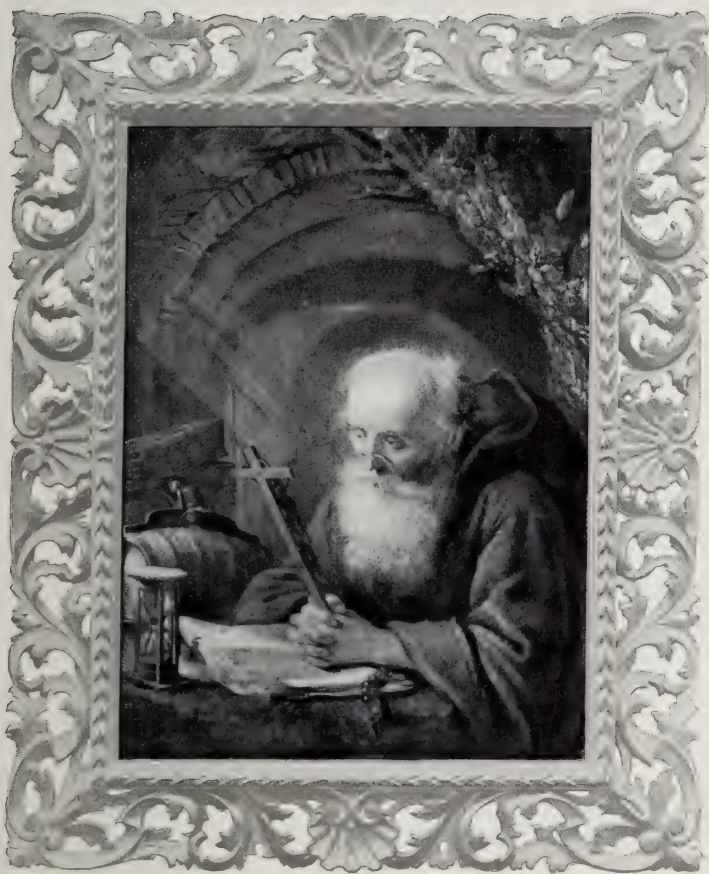
Such pictures as these have an historical value, for should every other visible witness of the existence of Holland in the seventeenth century—her period of greatness—vanish from the earth, and the pictures remain, in them would be found preserved the city, the country, the ports, the ships, the markets, the shops, the costumes, the arms, the merchandise, the household utensils, the food, the pleasures, the habits, the religious beliefs and superstitions, and the qualities of

the people. So completely did the artist depict all that he saw.

Burger remarks, in his *Dutch Galleries*, that those who have studied the paintings of Metzu, Terborch, or Caspar Netscher will be able to form a better idea of the manner and customs of the Dutch in the seventeenth century than could be obtained by poring over a whole library of books of archæology, history and biography. The Van Ostades, Jan Steen, and the Brouwers show us what may be called the vulgar side of this Dutch seventeenth century life, while Terborch, Netscher, Mieris, and Metzu take us into the dwellings of the rich and the refined. With the latter we see the inner life of the fair dames and their admirers, all in rich and rare costumes, rustling in satins and brocades. We admire the hangings and furniture of their dwellings, the walls all aglow with stamped leather, relieved by the black ebony frames of the mirrors, the great carved-marble chimney, the brocaded bed hangings, the richly decorated cabinets and wardrobes. How polished are those cavaliers, in their long locks, steenkirk cravats, and golden baldrics; how clean and neat the close fitting cap of the maid; how trim the page, with the silver salver on which the cut lemon is waiting to be squeezed into the embossed tankard. Or still accompanied by these refined folk, we take an airing under the limes of the "Maliebaan," or Mall; or visit the busy market-place and stroll along the sides of the canal, alive with boats and barges; the heavy gables of the red-brick houses on the other side throwing their bright reflections in the still waters below. Thus these magicians of the palette and the brush take us back two centuries and more, and show us the way these people lived in that little land reclaimed from the sea, which, behind its artificial dykes, bred and nourished so warlike and so valiant a race—a race of men that defied all the might and power and wealth of Spain and the Indies; that held its own against the arms of the Grand Monarque; a race whose fleets swept the seas of two hemispheres; of men who for one short century seemed to combine the qualities that had made Greece the mother of the arts, and Rome the mistress of the world.

It is interesting to note that in the following century when the artists grew weary of nature and the material conditions that had been their source of power, and sought inspiration in mythology, classicism and conventionalities, the imagination grew cold, style was impoverished and every spark of the former genius was extinct. The sun once set, darkness spread over the world of art.





THE HERMIT, BY G. DOU.



HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE TWIN-SCREW STEAMER ENTERING THE MAAS.

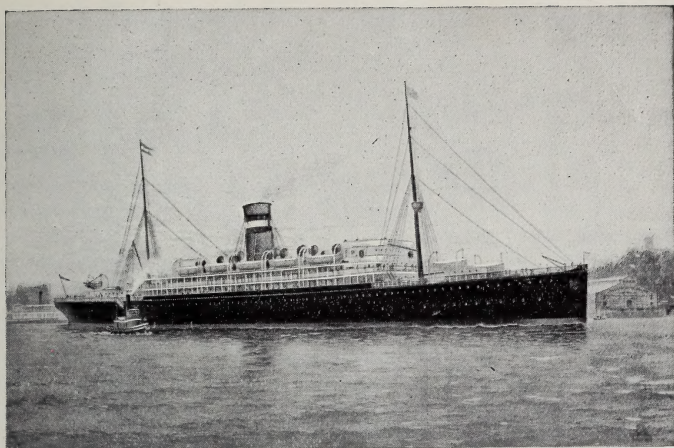
HOW TO REACH THE ART-CENTERS OF HOLLAND.

THE most direct and most convenient route from New York to Holland is via the Holland-America Line. The steamers of this line leave every Saturday from their docks, foot of Fifth and Sixth Streets, Hoboken, N. J., and touching at Boulogne-sur-Mer for the landing of passengers to France and England, proceed direct to Rotterdam where passengers will arrive from ten to twelve hours later.

The present fleet for the regular mail and passenger service between New York and Rotterdam consists of the following new twin-screw steamers :

NOORDAM,
RYNDAM,
POTSDAM,
STATENDAM,
ROTTERDAM.

These twin-screw steamers are of enormous tonnage ; they are all provided with bilge keels and are luxuriously appointed ; they afford all possible comfort for passengers, and embody in their construction the latest improvements which tend to make a sea voyage a pleasure trip.



HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE TWIN SCREW STEAMER ARRIVING AT
NEW YORK.

Illustrated hand-book and all other information about passage is promptly forwarded upon application to the general passenger offices of the Holland-America Line :

New York City, 39 Broadway.

Chicago, Ill., 90-92 Dearborn Street.

St. Louis, Mo., Cor. 9th and Locust Streets.

San Francisco, Cal., 621 Market Street.

Boston, Mass., 115 State Street.

Montreal, Can., 178 St. James Street.

Toronto, Can., Cor. Adelaide & Toronto Sts.

or to local agents.



